DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 459 041 RC 023 250

AUTHOR Meehan, Merrill L.; Cowley, Kimberly S.; Whittaker, Denise
TITLE Evaluating the Use of Student and Parent GEAR UP Survey Summaries in a Rural, Nine-County Region.
INSTITUTION AEL, Inc., Charleston, WV.
SPONS AGENCY Fairmont State Coll., WV.
PUB DATE 2001-11-00
NOTE 19p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Association (St. Louis, MO, November 7-10, 2001).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Aspiration; *Administrator Attitudes; *College Preparation; Disadvantaged Youth; Higher Education; *Information Utilization; Program Development; Rural Education; *Rural Youth; School Surveys; Secondary Education; *Student Surveys
IDENTIFIERS Parent Surveys; *West Virginia

ABSTRACT

In 1999, Fairmont State College (West Virginia) received a Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant for a 5-year program designed to encourage college aspirations and preparation among disadvantaged rural youth. During the first 2 years, parents and students in nine counties were surveyed to determine their aspirations for postsecondary education. Data summaries from these surveys were distributed to school administrators involved with the program. This paper reports on a survey of those administrators to determine how the data summaries were used, possible effects of the data, and suggestions for improvement. Findings indicate that those administrators who used the summaries were satisfied with them. Of the seven rating characteristics, "overall quality," "comprehensiveness," and "presentation/layout" were rated highest, followed by "relevance," "met my needs," and "usability." "Promptness" was rated lowest, although that rating was well above the midpoint on the rating scale. Summary findings were used as input for specific programs, needs assessment or program planning, and less specific programs. It is too early for the data summaries to have affected students in the program. The main influence of the summaries on parents was in making them more aware of the GEAR UP program. An appendix presents a sample data summary. (Contains 16 references.) (TD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 459 041

Evaluating the Use of Student and Parent GEAR UP Survey Summaries in a Rural, Nine-County Region

by
Merrill L. Meehan
Kimberly S. Cowley
AEL, Inc.

Denise Whittaker
Fairmont State College

November 2001

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the
American Educational Association
November 7-10, 2001
St. Louis, Missouri

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

RC 023250

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
M. Slack
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

AEL's mission is to link the knowledge from research with the wisdom from practice to improve teaching and learning. AEL serves as the Regional Educational Laboratory for Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. For these same four states, it operates both a Regional Technology in Education Consortium and the Eisenhower Regional Consortium for Mathematics and Science Education. In addition, it serves as the Region IV Comprehensive Center and operates the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.

Information about AEL projects, programs, and services is available by writing or calling AEL.

Post Office Box 1348
Charleston, West Virginia 25325-1348
304-347-0400
800-624-9120
304-347-0487 (fax)
aelinfo@ael.org
http://www.ael.org

© 2001 by AEL, Inc.

This publication is based on work sponsored wholly or in part by Fairmont State College, West Virginia. Its contents do not necessarily reflect the views of Fairmont State College.

AEL is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1
- GEAR UP Description 1
- Fairmont State College GEAR UP Grant 1
- Purpose and Objectives of Study 2
- Review of Literature 2

METHODS 5
- Instrumentation 5
- Data Collection and Analysis 5

FINDINGS 6
- Selected-Response Items 6
- Constructed-Response Items 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 9
- Conclusions 9
- Recommendations 10

REFERENCES 11

APPENDIX
- Sample Data Summary

LIST OF TABLES

1: Descriptive Statistics for Question One 7

INTRODUCTION

GEAR UP Description

In August 1999, President Clinton announced $120 million in GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) grants to 21 states and 164 partnerships of colleges and middle schools across the country (Office of the Press Secretary, 1999). Another $45 million in new grants were awarded in 2000 to 7 states and 73 partnerships (Office of the Press Secretary, 2000). These U.S. Department of Education-funded grants were to encourage disadvantaged youth to have high expectations, to stay in school, and to take academically rigorous courses to prepare them for college. GEAR UP differs from other federal programs in that it

- begins no later than the seventh grade to help ensure that students take appropriate college preparatory courses and follows them through high school
- transforms schools by working with entire grades of students (cohort or whole-grade approach) to provide a comprehensive array of services including mentoring, tutoring, counseling, strengthening the curriculum, professional development for teachers and staff, parent involvement, after-school programs, summer academic and enrichment programs, and college visits
- leverages local resources by encouraging colleges to partner with low-income middle schools and leverages nonfederal resources with a 1-for-1 match requirement
- provides college scholarships and 21st Century Scholar Certificates (early notification of students' eligibility for financial aid)
- bolsters state efforts by supporting early college preparation programs (Office of the Press Secretary, 1999)

Fairmont State College GEAR UP Grant

Fairmont State College (FSC) received the sixth largest grant nationwide for 1999-2000 and was the only West Virginia recipient. Grant criteria included a demonstrated need for funding as reflected by poverty levels, gross income levels, college-going rates, and academic preparedness; critical components of early intervention efforts, activities to promote college preparation, and parent involvement; and a demonstrated commitment of partners (FSC, 1999).

The FSC partnership grant aims to promote the academic advancement of higher education among youth by increasing their interest in and academic preparation for college. Fairmont's five-year grant includes early intervention, partnership, and scholarship components for its mostly rural, north central West Virginia constituents. Collaborating agencies include nine county boards of education (Barbour, Doddridge, Harrison, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, Randolph, Taylor, and Tucker) and a number of state, business, and organizational partners. All 55 of West Virginia's counties have been classified as *Appalachia* by the Appalachian Regional Commission (2000). Of

the 48 schools within the nine-county region served by the grant, 29 (60%) have a *rural* Johnson code, a system used by the National Center for Education Statistics (2000) to assign locale types. Of the remaining 19 schools, 16 (33%) are classified as *small town* and 3 (6%) as *large town* (all in Monongalia County, where Morgantown and the West Virginia University are located).

The FSC GEAR UP grant initially funds academic and support services for seventh-grade students and their parents in the nine participating counties and follows those students through the following four years. In addition, a new pool of seventh graders is added each successive year. By the end of the five-year funding cycle, the majority of the high school population would have participated in GEAR UP directly or at least benefitted from the overflow effect of having a GEAR UP presence in each middle and high school. At this point, core elements of GEAR UP will have been institutionalized and systemic and environmental changes implemented in all 48 middle and high schools in the nine-county area.

Purpose and Objectives of Study

As part of its scope of work in the GEAR UP grant, Fairmont State College contracted with AEL, Inc., to administer and analyze student and parent surveys to gather baseline information on incoming seventh-grade students' and parents' awareness and perceptions of, interest in, and aspirations for students' postsecondary education. AEL staff have administered and analyzed Fairmont GEAR UP data for the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years. For the first year, data summaries were provided at the regional and county levels. For the second year, data summaries also were provided at the individual school level. Also, for each year, a report on all the summaries was provided by AEL staff to the GEAR UP coordinator (Cowley, 2000; Cowley, 2001). As part of AEL's ongoing commitment to improving the quality and usefulness of its products (in this case, data summaries) and emphasizing the utility of data-based decision-making, a survey was developed and administered to ultimate users of the GEAR UP data (county and school GEAR UP coordinators). This paper summarizes the findings from that survey, including how the data in the summaries were used, possible effects of the data, and suggestions for improvement.

Review of Literature

Student aspirations extend far beyond individual dreams or ambitions. Aspirations encompass individual and family educational goals, career choices, and self-concept. Quaglia and Perry (1993, p. 2) define aspirations as being composed of two components: inspiration and ambitions. "*Ambitions* represents an individual's ability to look ahead and invest in the future. *Inspiration* can be described as the individual's ability to invest the time, energy, and effort presently to reach their ambitions." (For a historical perspective on the aspirations construct, see Quaglia and Cobb's 1996 "Toward a Theory of Student Aspirations," *Journal of Research in Rural Education, 12*[3], 127-132.)

Researchers at the University of Maine's National Center for Student Aspirations have identified eight conditions that support high levels of aspirations in youth: achievement, belonging,

curiosity, empowerment, excitement, mentoring, risk taking, and self-confidence (Plucker & Quaglia, 1998). The authors state that these conditions "provide an interpretive template that frames how students can be viewed and how schools can positively support . . . the development of student aspirations" (p. 253). Further research at the University's College of Education and Human Development resulted in modifications to the eight factors related to student aspirations. These eight conditions, which "emphasize the importance of putting the students at the center of any school initiative or program" (University of Maine, 1999, p. 1), include

- **Belonging:** A relationship between two or more individuals characterized by a sense of connection, support, and community
- **Heroes:** People whom children admire and imitate because of their personal talents
- **Sense of Accomplishment:** In addition to academic success, recognizes effort, perseverance, and citizenship as important signs of children's success
- **Fun and Excitement:** Involves being interested in something, being emotionally involved, or having an intense experience or desire of some kind
- **Spirit of Adventure:** Characterized as a child's ability to take on positive, healthy challenges
- **Curiosity and Creativity:** Characterized as inquisitiveness, eagerness, a strong desire to learn new or interesting things, and a desire to satisfy the mind with new discoveries
- **Leadership and Responsibility:** Children's sense of control and responsibility for their actions and words
- **Confidence to Take Action:** The extent to which children believe in themselves and is related to self-regard, self-esteem, self-worth, and self-respect

Adolescence is characterized by emotional, physical, cognitive, and social transformations. As patterns of thoughts or choices emerge, youth begin to gain a picture of "who they are," which is essential for school to have meaning and purpose. Schools can help facilitate that transformation by providing an environment conducive for students to learn how to usefully and productively manage their time, energy, and efforts in ways that are meaningful to them for the future and yet enjoyable to them in the present (Quaglia & Perry, 1993). Educators can try to influence aspirations with inspiration, realism, and respect (Sizer, 1996). Schools can achieve this, according to Sizer, by attracting "interesting" staff with aspirations of their own, keeping schools small to allow more than casual interactions, making time for students to pursue interests, providing "aspirer" models from the community, and being flexible. He notes, "Expect every youngster to have a worthy passion of some sort. Work at it, make it a priority, speak about it, make exceptions for it" (p. 126). Quaglia and Cobb (1996) state that youth are pressured toward uniformity by social groups and

suggest that schools combat this mind-set by fostering an environment that encourages diversity, excellence, and risk taking among students.

Cobb, McIntire, and Pratt (as cited in Quaglia & Perry, 1993) report that rural youth believe that their parents are more supportive of them taking full-time jobs, attending vocational schools, or joining the service rather than going to college. In addition, Walberg and Greenberg (1996) note that rural youth also face economic decline, limited work opportunities, and increased isolation. Yet youth are a rural community's greatest asset. When youth migrate from their hometowns, rural communities suffer a loss of talent and vitality crucial to the development or maintenance of a desirable future for these communities (Ley, Nelson, & Beltyukova, 1996). Factors affecting out-migration include limited economic opportunities, lack of faith in a community to sustain favorable economic conditions, and a willingness of rural youth to look elsewhere. All of these factors, combined with overall lower aspirations for postsecondary education, make it more difficult for rural youth to achieve career and economic success within West Virginia.

Howley, Harmon, and Leopold (1996) note that educators and community leaders believe that rural youth are becoming less involved in their hometown communities—this disengagement may reinforce students' inclination to migrate elsewhere. The trick is to encourage and facilitate the development of rural students' aspirations and, at the same time, transform local communities into appealing places where young adults can prosper and grow while contributing to the quality of rural life.

According to Kampits (1996), rural youth have significantly higher graduation rates from high school than urban youth, yet they are less likely to pursue college degrees and are less likely to graduate from high school with firm plans for the future. In addition, low-income youth are less likely than more affluent youth to enroll in more demanding college-preparatory courses. She challenges educators to focus on the needs of the students:

> Regardless of high expectations—even regulations—that students will learn and demonstrate specific knowledge and understanding, first they must want to learn, be inspired to learn, and understand why they should learn. In short, they must be full partners, not just subjects, in the learning process. (Kampits, 1996, p. 176)

METHODS

Instrumentation

In September 2001, AEL staff developed a client usage survey related to the individualized summaries of GEAR UP data provided in March 2001 to 9 county administrators and 29 school administrators in the Fairmont State College GEAR UP program. See the Appendix for a copy of a sample summary.

The one-page survey provided a brief introductory paragraph stating the purposes of the survey, which were to determine the ways in which the GEAR UP summaries were used by county and school staff and to determine the extent of usefulness of the summaries. After indicating whether they were at the county or school level, respondents were asked in Question 1 to rate their level of satisfaction with the survey summaries on seven characteristics, using a scale of 1 (Very Dissatisfied) to 5 (Very Satisfied). The seven items included overall quality, presentation/layout, usability, promptness, relevance, met needs, and comprehensiveness. Respondents were then asked to respond to five open-ended items.

Question 2: Describe how the survey summaries were analyzed (i.e., who reviewed them, alone or in group settings, if and how information was presented to others)

Question 3: How were findings from the survey data used as input for the GEAR UP initiative? (I.e., how did data support implementation of planned program components, what changes were made to existing plans, what additional services or activities were included)

Question 4: Describe how survey data may have affected students involved in the GEAR UP initiative.

Question 5: Describe how survey data may have affected parents involved in the GEAR UP initiative.

Question 6: What are your suggestions for improving future baseline survey summaries?

Data Collection and Analysis

The surveys were administered by the Fairmont State College GEAR UP program director at a meeting on September 17, 2001. County and school administrators were asked to complete the survey during the meeting and to return them to the program director, who would then mail the completed surveys to AEL for analysis. Of 38 possible surveys (9 counties and 29 schools), 30 usable surveys were returned, for a final return rate of 79%. AEL staff received the surveys in October 2001. A database was created using SPSS Windows for the seven selected-response items in Question 1 and for the five open-ended Questions (2-6). Descriptive statistics were generated for the seven items in Question 1, while the open-ended comments were categorized by themes.

FINDINGS

This section presents the findings from the survey of school administrators regarding their uses of the county and school GEAR UP survey summaries provided to them by AEL staff.

Selected-Response Items

Table 1 displays the results of the seven items in question number one. All 30 respondents answered each item except for item d, for which one person omitted a response. On the five-point response scale, all the means were above the midpoint and three of the items were at 4.00 or above. At 4.03 "Overall quality" and "Comprehensiveness" were tied for the highest rated items. Then, "Presentation/layout" was rated next under the top pair of items. "Relevance" and "Met my needs" were the two items rated in the middle. Last, "Usability" and "Promptness" were the lowest-rated items; but, again, they were well above the midpoint of the response scale. All the standard deviations were rather small, ranging from a .59 to .85, indicating much agreement among the respondents within and across their ratings of the items.

Constructed-Response Items

The second question asked the respondents to describe how the survey summaries were analyzed. One respondent failed to provide a reply to the question and another reply was not responsive to the question. The remaining 28 responses were coded into six different categories. Six responses were coded into a category of "group or staff, but not specific," such as "group setting," or "group presentation." Four responses were placed in a category of individuals in an order from "principals, GEAR UP coordinators, then staff." Three responses were placed in a category labeled "GEAR UP coordinator, GEAR UP staff alone." Three responses were that they didn't know because it was their first look at the data, which is reasonable since several administrators were new to their jobs and the meeting was on September 17th. Last, the category with the largest number of "other" (n=12) was a group of individualistic, idiosyncratic responses. Sample responses in this category include: "Individuals," "A few teachers," "Superintendent," "Reviewed on my own," "Local School Improvement Council," and "Guidance Counselors."

Table 1:
Descriptive Statistics for Question One

Item	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
a. Overall quality	30	4.03	0.67
b. Presentation/layout	30	4.00	0.64
c. Usability	30	3.77	0.63
d. Promptness	29	3.72	0.59
e. Relevance	30	3.97	0.67
f. Met my needs	30	3.80	0.66
g. Comprehensiveness	30	4.03	0.85

The third question asked "How were the findings from the survey data used as input for the GEAR UP initiative?" Four respondents failed to provide a reply to the question and the other 26 respondents provided a total of 27 replies coded into categories. However, one of those was "Not sure," which was considered non-responsive to the question. Nine of the remaining 26 replies were placed in a category of "general usage, but not specific to a program or activity." Examples included: "Assisted in implementation," "Identify status and trends," and "Changes to program were done at school level." Eight responses were placed in a category that did name a specific program or activity, such as: "Planned parental workshops, planned program components," "A computer class was offered to parents," "Tutoring sessions," "college visitations were good," and "Decisions on afterschool—what to tutor and how." Six responses were placed in a category of "needs assessment or program planning." Two responses said it was their first look at the data. Last, one response was a two-sentence acknowledgment that the data were inspected for evidence of program success, but a longitudinal look at the data is needed.

The fourth survey question asked the respondent to "Describe how survey data may have affected students involved in the GEAR UP initiative." Five respondents left it blank and three respondents said "Not sure" or "First time seeing the data." One reply was a negative response, indicating no impact or change. Two replies were positive and specific, but they included both parents and students and one said their involvement in the program increased. Two responses also were positive in nature, but they were general in nature and did not list or name anything specific, such as "Beneficial to a degree." Four responses were coded as student-specific examples, such as: "Reflection on motivation," "Started students thinking about college," and "students will consider after-school education." The largest number of replies (n=13) were placed in a category that named program-specific examples. Examples from this category include: "Operation of after-school program improved," "Students were affected by the types of programming offered," "Provides focus on their goals," "directed to their needs/interests," and "Indicates interests and trends."

The fifth question was similar to the fourth except that it focused on how the GEAR UP survey data may have affected parents in the initiative. Again, there were five respondents who left it blank and another five who said "Not sure" or indicated it was the first time that they saw the data. Of the 20 responses, each was coded into one of six categories. Six of those responses were placed in a category stating that the parents were more aware of the program and/or its activities. Examples in the category include: "Made parents more aware," "More aware of help students/parents can receive," and "Availability of program offerings." Three replies were grouped into a category that let the GEAR UP staff know of parents' needs for activities, such as "Provided basis for scheduling of parent activities." Two replies were of specific requests for workshops such as financial and or computer use. Two other responses were in a group that indicated the survey data helps parents to meet the needs of their children. Five replies were placed in an "Other/Miscellaneous" category that ranged from "Reviewed for budget" to "Need to acquire more community input." Last, only two replies were coded as negative and grouped together. These were: "Doubtful parents affected" and "Given the nature of many parents, the data may have had only a small impact."

Question number 6, the last one on the user's survey, asked "What are your suggestions for improving future baseline survey summaries?" Eight respondents did not provide any reply at all and one respondent replied "First time I have seen the data." Two replies simply said "None" and one reply was positive but not responsive to the question. Two respondents provided replies that were coded into two categories. The largest number of replies (n=9) fit in a category of "Longitudinal study or follow-ups." Examples of responses in this category include: "Follow each group of students," "A follow-up after a few years," "Longitudinal study," "Get data at various grade levels," "Do more than 7th graders," and "Survey individual grades." Two replies suggested providing GEAR UP survey summaries to parents. Finally, seven responses fit into a category dealing with various suggestions to improve the surveys by using other techniques. Examples of responses in this category include: "Use interviews," "Change time of year it is given," "More user-friendly, i.e., on-line surveys," "Avoid the start of the school year," and "Some data [questions] needs to be expanded.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Several conclusions can be drawn from the survey of the use of GEAR UP student and parent survey summaries.

1. Several of the survey respondents were new to their position because they did not see the data summaries prior to the meeting in which they received the user survey to complete.

2. Those administrators who used the GEAR UP summaries were quite satisfied with them, as noted by their ratings on seven characteristics. And the GEAR UP survey users were in agreement on their replies as noted by the small standard deviations of ratings.

3. Of the seven rating characteristics, "Overall quality," "Comprehensiveness," and "Presentation/layout" were rated highest. Next, "Relevance," "Met my needs," and "Usability" were rated next in order and "Promptness" was rated lowest, even though that rating was well above the midpoint on the rating scale.

4. The GEAR UP survey data summaries were analyzed by a wide variety of individuals and groups in the local schools from the Local School Improvement Council and superintendent to multi-member groups of school staff. The most often mentioned group members who analyzed the data summaries included GEAR UP coordinators, GEAR UP staff, and other school administrators.

5. Findings from the GEAR UP data summaries were used as input for the initiative in several main ways, including for specific programs/activities; for needs assessment or program planning; and in general, less specific programs/activities.

6. School administrators were not able to cite many ways that the data summaries have affected students as yet, citing program-specific examples more often than the requested student-specific examples. Its safe to conclude that it is too early for the GEAR UP data summaries to have affected students in the program.

7. The main influence of the data summaries on parents, according to the school administrators was in the area of making them more aware of the GEAR UP program and activities although a variety of other influences were named. Overall, there is much room for the program to affect parents.

8. GEAR UP data summary users reported several areas for their improvement with the call for follow up or longitudinal studies being the most often cited improvement, followed by a variety of different data collection methods or survey timing.

9. The new district and individual GEAR UP student and parent survey summaries have not been in use long enough to evoke numerous instances of the use with various stakeholder groups although, interestingly enough, there were numerous suggestions for improvement in them.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this initial user survey of the new GEAR UP data summaries, several recommendations are offered.

1. District and school administrators should explore ways to share the GEAR UP data summaries with program coordinators and staff in order to provide inputs to program activities for students and parents in the program.

2. District and school administrators should explore ways to share the GEAR UP data summaries with program coordinators and staff in order to design, redesign, or otherwise modify program activities in the schools and communities.

3. GEAR UP program administrators should investigate possible ways to get the student and parent survey summaries into the hands of district and school administrators earlier than was done in the first year.

4. GEAR UP program administrators should consider implementing follow up or longitudinal GEAR UP studies of students and their parents in the program. This recommendation would apply best to the initial cohort of seventh graders who are in high school now.

REFERENCES

Appalachian Regional Commission. (2000). *The Appalachian region.* http://www.arc.gov/aboutarc/region/abtapreg.htm (retrieved July 2000)

Cowley, K.S. (2001). *Fairmont State College GEAR UP project: Year 2 baseline survey (2000-2001).* Charleston, WV: AEL.

Cowley, K.S. (2000). *Student and parent awareness of and aspirations for postsecondary education: Fairmont State College GEAR UP Project, Year 1.* Charleston, WV: AEL.

Fairmont State College. (1999). *GEAR UP partnership grant overview.* Fairmont, WV: Author.

Howley, C. B., Harmon, H. L., & Leopold, G. D. (1996). Rural scholars or bright rednecks? Aspirations for a sense of place among rural youth in Appalachia. *Journal of Research in Rural Education, 12*(3), 150-160.

Kampits, E. I. (1996). Rural partnerships in New England: Learning from kids. *Journal of Research in Rural Education, 12*(3), 171-177.

Ley, J., Nelson, S., & Beltyukova, S. (1996). Congruence of aspirations of rural youth with expectations held by parents and school staff. *Journal of Research in Rural Education, 12*(3), 133-141.

National Center for Education Statistics. *1997-98 Common Core of Data: Information on public schools and school districts in the United States.* Public elementary/secondary school universe survey data. Washington, DC: Author. http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pubschuniv.html (retrieved July 2000)

Office of the Press Secretary. (2000). *New grants get middle-schoolers on the path to college.* White House Education Press Releases and Statements. http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/09-2000/0912.html (retrieved June 2001)

Office of the Press Secretary. (1999). *President Clinton announces $120 million in GEAR UP grants.* White House Education Press Releases and Statements. http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/08-1999/wh-0807a.html (retrieved July 2000)

Plucker, J. A., & Quaglia, R. J. (1998). The student aspirations survey: Assessing student effort and goals. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 58*(2), 252-257.

Quaglia, R. J., & Cobb, C. D. (1996). Toward a theory of student aspirations. *Journal of Research in Rural Education, 12*(3), 127-132.

Quaglia, R. J., & Perry, C. M. (1993). *A study of underlying variables affecting aspirations of rural youth.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, Georgia.

Sizer, T. R. (1996). Dreams, interests, aspirations. *Journal of Research in Rural Education, 12*(3), 125-126.

University of Maine. (1999). *Students speak: My education and my future: Preliminary report for State of Maine (grades 6-8).* Orono, ME: College of Education and Human Development, Center for Research and Evaluation.

Walberg, H. J., & Greenberg, R. (1996). Youth realities and aspirations. *Journal of Research in Rural Education, 12*(3), 178-180.

APPENDIX:

Sample Data Summary

Fairmont State College: GEAR UP Partnership Grant
2000-2001 7th Grade Student Survey

Identification Code: 7/18/2000

__ __ __ - __ __ - __ __ __ __ - __ __ - __ __

A total of 58 respondents.

Note: Percentages are based on the number of respondents for each item.
Please place a checkmark (✓) or write in your answer, as appropriate.

School and School Work

1. Who usually helps you with your homework?

	Yes	*No*
A teacher at your school	☐ 76%	☐ 24%
A GEAR UP tutor	☐ 4%	☐ 96%
A GEAR UP mentor	☐ 2%	☐ 98%
Your mother, father, or guardian	☐ 90%	☐ 10%
Another adult in your home	☐ 38%	☐ 62%
Your brother or sister	☐ 53%	☐ 47%
A classmate or friend	☐ 70%	☐ 30%
Some other person	☐ 14%	☐ 86%

2. Compared with other students, how hard do you think you work in school?

Much less Hard	*Not as Hard*	*About Same*	*Harder*	*Much Harder*
☐ 3%	☐ 3%	☐ 59%	☐ 24%	☐ 10%

3. What type of student do you consider yourself to be?

Poor	*Fair*	*Good*	*Excellent*
☐ 2%	☐ 19%	☐ 60%	☐ 19%

4. How important to you is what each of the following people think you should do about your education?

	Not Impt.	*Some Impt.*	*Very Impt.*
Parent(s) or guardian(s)	☐ 2%	☐ 9%	☐ 90%
Teacher(s)	☐ 3%	☐ 38%	☐ 59%
Guidance counselor(s)	☐ 16%	☐ 48%	☐ 36%
Principal or assistant principal	☐ 12%	☐ 30%	☐ 58%
Religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi, etc.)	☐ 24%	☐ 46%	☐ 31%
Friend(s)	☐ 16%	☐ 49%	☐ 35%
Coach	☐ 25%	☐ 43%	☐ 32%
GEAR UP staff (mentors, tutors, staff, etc.)	☐ 16%	☐ 46%	☐ 38%
Some other person	☐ 47%	☐ 13%	☐ 40%

Knowledge about College

5. Have you talked with your school counselor or someone else at your school about the entrance requirements for college?

Yes	*No*
☐ 16%	☐ 84%

6. Do you have an idea of what courses you should take in high school to prepare you for college?

Yes	*No*
☐ 52%	☐ 48%

7. Have you heard of the following types of postsecondary schools?

	Yes	*No*
Two-year or community college	☐ 57%	☐ 43%
Four-year college or university	☐ 80%	☐ 20%
Vocational, trade, or business school	☐ 54%	☐ 46%

Continue

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

8. How much do you think it costs to attend a four-year public college in your state for one year? $7,950 average

9. How important to your future is getting an education beyond high school?

Don't Know	*Not Impt.*	*Some Impt.*	*Very Impt.*
☐ 6%	☐ 2%	☐ 24%	☐ 68%

10. Do you think a person with a college degree earns more money in one year than a person who does not have a college degree?

Yes	*No*
☐ 91%	☐ 9%

Plans for the Future

11. Do you think you will continue your education after high school (that is, go to college or attend a trade school, etc.)?

Yes	*No*	*Not Sure*
☐67%	☐ 0%	☐33%

12. From whom do you get most of your information about your options for continuing your education after high school?

	Yes	*No*
Parent(s) or guardian(s)	☐94%	☐ 6%
Brother(s) or sister(s)	☐44%	☐56%
Guidance counselor(s)	☐23%	☐77%
Teacher(s)	☐69%	☐31%
Principal or assistant principal	☐48%	☐52%
Religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi, etc.)	☐17%	☐83%
Friend(s)	☐54%	☐46%
An adult in the GEAR UP program	☐31%	☐69%
Some other person	☐21%	☐79%

13. How far in school do you think you will get after high school? *(Check only one.)*

☐ 4% Certificate program (less than two-year program)
☐ 4% Associates degree (AA)
☐ 7% Bachelors degree (BA)
☐20% Graduate degree (MA, Ph.D., law, MD)
☐66% Don't know

14. What is the main reason you would not continue your education after high school? *(Check only one.)*

☐31% It costs too much or I cannot afford it
☐16% I need or want to work
☐14% My grades are not good enough
☐12% I'm just not interested
☐ 2% I want to join the military service
☐14% I want to start a family or I need to take care of my family
☐12% Some other reason

15. Do you think you will be able to afford to attend a four-year college or university after high school?

Definitely Not	*Doubt It*	*Not Sure*	*Probably*	*Definitely*
☐ 4%	☐11%	☐33%	☐38%	☐14%

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Continue

Your Family

16. During the past year, have you discussed academic requirements for attending a 4-year college with any adults in your household?

	Yes	*No*
	☐37%	☐63%

17. Did any of your family members attend or get a college degree?

	Yes	*No*	*Not Sure*
Mother or female guardian	☐37%	☐43%	☐20%
Father or male guardian	☐21%	☐56%	☐23%
Brother(s) or sister(s)	☐23%	☐67%	☐10%
Grandparent(s)	☐17%	☐44%	☐39%

18. How much education do you think your parent(s) or guardian(s) want you to get? *(Check one box in each column.)*

	Father	*Mother*
Does not apply	☐ 8%	☐ 2%
Less than high school graduation	☐ 6%	☐ 2%
High school graduation	☐23%	☐15%
Certificate program	☐ 2%	☐10%
Associates degree (AA)	☐ 4%	☐10%
Bachelors degree (BA)	☐17%	☐ 8%
Graduate degree (MA, Ph.D., law, MD)	☐38%	☐54%

Background

19. What is your gender?

Male	*Female*
☐55%	☐45%

20. When were you born?

1986 (13%), 1987 (35%), 1988 (52%)

Month Day Year

21. How do you describe yourself?

- ☐ 6% American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ 0% Asian
- ☐ 2% Black or African American
- ☐ 6% Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ 0% Native Hawaiian or Other Pac. Islander
- ☐83% White
- ☐ 4% Other

PLEASE STOP HERE. DO NOT COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SECTION.

GEAR UP Participation

22. Overall, how much would you say you participate in the GEAR UP program?

Never	*Some-times*	*Half Time*	*Most Time*	*Always*
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

23. During the past school year, how often did you attend each of the following activities provided by the GEAR UP program?

	Not Offered	*Never*	*Few Times*	*Occa-sionally*	*Fre-quently*	*Every Day*
Tutoring in math	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tutoring in English	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tutoring in other academic subjects	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tutoring for SAT, ACT, or other college entrance exam	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other tutoring (what?) _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Computer-assisted lab, any type	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

BEST COPY AVAILABLE